

Energizing Couch Potatoes

Are your children couch potatoes? Ours used to be—until my husband and I came up with a plan. We decided to allot each child one “free” hour of computer, television, or video-game time a day. They can mix and match these activities if they want to, but if they watch a sibling doing any of these things, that counts for their hour. After they have used their free hour, our children can then earn up to another hour for that day by engaging in other healthy or useful activities.

For instance, they can provide an hour of service for another family member to earn 15 extra minutes. Practicing the piano a half hour beyond the regular practice time earns another 15 minutes. Hour-long activities such as exercising or playing outdoors, reading a book, or playing constructively with a friend are also encouraged. They can earn an extra hour in 15-minute increments, but we limit computer and TV time to two hours a day maximum.

How do we keep track of it all? Initially we made a chart to record the 15-minute earnings, but we soon switched to the honor system. In fact, our children seem to enjoy the constructive activities

so much that they sometimes accrue TV

time and don't bother to use it!

By earning TV and computer time, our children have become more conscious of how they spend their time overall. Now they tend to choose activities that strengthen them—mentally and physically.

Kathryn Palmer, Colorado

Just a Small Donation

Just \$1—we wondered if such a small donation would make a difference. As a couple, we'd always paid our tithes and fast offerings. But on a fixed pension, it was a challenge to contribute to the other funds, such as general missionary and Book of Mormon, listed on the donation slip. During one of our home teachers' visits, we mentioned that we'd been thinking of donating \$1 to each fund and wondered if that would look silly or cheap, giving so little. But we realized if every Church member who is able would do this, it could provide millions of dollars a month to each of these funds.

With that encouraging realization, we began to make our dollar donations each month.

Our donation may be small, but if Church members throughout the world joined the effort, just think of the blessings that could be provided to Church members and others throughout the world.

Alf and Lois Hopkins, Canada





Family Fun with the Articles of Faith

Many of us are trying to help our families or Primary classes learn the Articles of Faith. So why not make a game of it? First, memorize the following key words for each article of faith: (1) Godhead, (2) Adam, (3) Atonement, (4) first principles, (5) hands, (6) organization, (7) gifts, (8) word of God, (9) revelation, (10) ten tribes, (11) worshipping, (12) law, (13) praiseworthy (see the Primary 5 manual). Then you're ready to play the following games:

• **Musical articles.**

Write each key word on a different large square of colored paper. Place the squares on the floor. Play some music and have

the children move clockwise from square to square. When the music stops, the players who can say the article of faith indicated on their square are invited to do so. Repeat the game several times so the children can practice several articles of faith.

• **Brainteaser.** Have one person face the group and draw a key word from a sack. Without looking at the word, the person sticks it on his or her forehead with a bit of tape. The group then gives hints or repeats the

matching article of faith, without saying the key word. If someone says the word before the person with the word on his or her forehead guesses it, that person must place the next key word on his or her forehead.

• **Make a match.** Write each key word and the numbers 1–13 on separate squares of paper. Turn the papers face down. One at a time, the players turn over two squares of paper until they find the matches.

Suzanne Ferrin, Utah



Family History Now

What do taking photographs, scrapbooking, and writing in your journal have in common? They are all relatively simple ways to gather and record your family history. Even during your busiest seasons of life, you can still gather valuable information about immediate and extended family.

1. Take photographs. Develop all your still images and organize them in an album or scrapbook, writing down details as you go. Even if your photos end up in a storage box, at least record pertinent information on the back of each—person's name, location, and date, if not automatically printed. You can also store this information with your video and digital recordings. Looking back at my 50-year-old photos, I can seldom distinguish my boys from one another in their baby pictures—and neither can anyone else. So make it easy on yourself and record the details as you go. Also, ask family members for copies of old family photos, along with all the information they may have.

2. Scrapbook. Since scrapbooking is a great way to preserve your family's history, you may want to include full-page descriptions of family events. Short captions are good too, but the more information you can provide, the better. At Mom's birthday party,

for instance, you could list who came and how they are related, where the party was held, what food was served, what gifts she received, and what activities everyone did.

3. Keep a journal. Not only can you express your innermost thoughts in your journal, but you can also keep track of family events. Document births, deaths, marriages, birthdays, graduations, and other important events, including as many details as possible. In writing about Uncle

John's funeral, for instance, tell where it was held, who attended, and their relationship to the deceased. If you don't already know all the details, tag the journal page so you can verify historical information later.

If you are not able to devote much time to family history work, at least do what you can. Remember that today will soon become yesterday—and eventually history. Don't let it slip away.

Roxanne Freeman, Michigan